



National Farmers Union Board of Directors Resolution on Senate Farm Bill

The goal of any farm bill should be to provide a strong safety net for our nation's family farmers and ranchers, improve farm sustainability, and ensure access to fair and diverse markets. Given persistent and ongoing economic challenges in the farm economy, Congress must pass a farm bill that provides strong support in the best interests of family farms, rural communities and consumers. On behalf of nearly 200,000 members across the country, National Farmers Union's Board of Directors commends the bipartisan efforts of the Senate Agriculture Committee to advance the farm bill.

Weak commodity prices, large surpluses, and an increasingly consolidated marketplace prevent farmers from receiving a fair price from the market. Net farm income is less than half of what it was in 2013, leaving farmers to rely on price supports to sustain their operations. While the Senate farm bill does not include much needed increases to PLC reference prices, the bill makes important investments to support dairy farmers. The bill also modernizes FSA loan limits, while maintaining broad access to operating and ownership loans.

Natural resource concerns including water quality, aquifer recharge and farm resilience through soil health practices promoting carbon sequestration are critical for farm productivity now and for generations to come. The Senate farm bill maintains overall funding for conservation programs that improve the long-term sustainability of family farms and ranches. While the legislation reduces funding for EQIP and CSP, it includes many reforms to improve access to working lands conservation programs and enhance their environmental benefits. The bill also maintains mandatory funding for programs that promote the development of the bioeconomy in rural areas.

Access to new markets provides farmers and ranchers opportunities to diversify their operations, improve their profitability, and meet growing consumer demands. The Senate farm bill increases funding to promote the development of local, regional, and value-added agricultural markets. It maintains funding for the Organic Certification Cost-Share program and increases funding for organic research. It also provides farmers with expansive new opportunities by deregulating and allowing for the cultivation of hemp.

National Farmers Union encourages the Senate to build on these improvements by adopting changes that improve the farm safety net, promote farm sustainability, and ensure access to fair and diverse markets. We specifically urge the adoption of farm program payment limits that are targeted to those who are actively engaged in family farming operations.

Finally, we urge the Senate to promptly pass this critical piece of legislation.